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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 16th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KRENKEL (Austria)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 93: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (continued)

(a) QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION AND TO YOUTH, AGEING, DISABLED PERSONS AND THE FAMILY (continued) (A/47/214-E/1992/50, A/47/216-E/1992/43, A/47/339, A/47/349, A/47/369, A/47/415 and Corr.1; A/C.3/47/4)

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1. Mr. BROWN (Ghana) said that he regretted that the world social situation continued to deteriorate with each successive year. Twenty years after the adoption by the General Assembly of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development, results in that area were still negligible. The end of the cold war, while rekindling hopes for the developing countries, had at the same time engendered new fears: the flow of resources had shifted towards Eastern Europe, leading many foreign companies to relocate from Africa and other third world countries to that area of Europe. As a result, poverty was spreading, further exacerbated by such factors as drought, social strife, destruction of the environment, falling commodity prices and the soaring external debt of the developing countries, which amounted to $1.3 billion. Debt-servicing alone absorbed enormous amounts, which might otherwise have been used to boost investments, promote economic growth and improve educational and health services.

2. Faced with those difficulties, an increasing number of developing countries, particularly in Africa, had been forced to adopt austere structural adjustment programmes. Such had been the case in Ghana since 1983, but the enormous social costs had necessitated the adoption of a programme of action to mitigate the social costs of adjustment.

3. His delegation supported the proposed convening of a world summit for social development which, by stimulating global trade and economic growth, would remove the need for people to migrate in search of better employment prospects. The summit would also provide an opportunity for the United Nations to seek means of solving its serious financial problems, which were adversely affecting implementation of its programmes, particularly those relating to the disabled, youth, ageing and the family.

4. The four plenary meetings of the General Assembly to mark the end of the United Nations Decade of the Disabled highlighted the results achieved over that period, in particular the heightened international awareness of the barriers to the full social integration of disabled persons and the need to move away from charity towards integrated social development planning. As the Secretary-General had stated, however, that greater awareness of the problems

(Mr. Brown, Ghana)

was vitiated by the shortage of resources. For that reason, the issue of financing should be high on the agenda of the forthcoming world summit for social development.

5. His delegation conveyed its sympathy to the Government and people of Egypt on the occasion of its recent catastrophic earthquake. Apart from the heavy toll which it had exacted in human lives, a disaster of that kind, which could strike any country, would add to the number of disabled persons, persons whose functions and activities had been drastically reduced overnight.

6. At the present time, there was every indication that the Commission for Social Development, of which Ghana was a member, would be charged at its thirty-third session in February 1993 with finalizing a draft long-term strategy to implement the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons beyond the Decade and the draft standard rules on the equalization of opportunities for disabled persons, which would form the basis of future activities. Ghana hoped that those programmes would be given adequate financial backing.

7. Recognizing the importance of children and young people, Africa was preparing, through the joint efforts of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Senegalese Government, to convene an international conference on assistance to African children. The conference was aimed at encouraging African countries to reorient and, where possible, increase their allocations to programmes that benefit children, to stimulate dialogue between African countries and the international community regarding the survival, protection and development of children in Africa and to revive global interest in Africa in order to ensure lasting support for human development in the continent. His delegation urged all States, particularly those from Africa, and international organizations to make an active contribution to the success of the conference.

8. The Secretary-General, in his report A/47/349, listed the many problems - unemployment, drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, to mention a few - faced by the youth of today. His delegation sincerely hoped that the celebration in 1995 of the tenth anniversary of International Youth Year would offer an opportunity for reflection on the situation of youth and for the launching of action-oriented programmes for the year 2000 and beyond.

9. It noted with satisfaction the arrangements for the holding of four regional preparatory meetings on the International Year of the Family. It welcomed the offers by the Governments of Tunisia, Colombia, Malta and China to host those meetings, which, it hoped, would promote preparations at regional and national levels for the Year. Experience had proved that national efforts could only succeed if they were supported by international cooperation.

10. Mr. AHAMED (India) drew attention to the Secretary-General's report (E/1992/17) which took stock of the important changes in the world, particularly those that occurred in 1992. The reduction of global tension had permitted a redeployment of resources aimed at fostering development. Furthermore, world leaders were congregating to discuss matters other than those related to peace and security, in particular, social problems. Yet, as the Secretary-General had observed, while many developing countries, including India, had made substantial progress in the socio-economic sectors, the time had come for a reappraisal of policies.

11. For that reason, India had taken several major steps over the past year aimed at reorienting its economic and social sectors, encouraging private investment, generating more jobs and targeting development programmes, particularly those involving the development of human resources, primarily youth and women. Since independence, India had endeavoured to improve the social conditions of its most disadvantaged population groups, particularly in the rural areas, through the provision of housing, drinking water and electricity. Areas such as Kerala and Pondicherry and some districts in Tamil Nadu and West Bengal had achieved 100 per cent literacy.

12. His delegation welcomed the Chilean proposal to convene a world summit for social development. The Constitution of India aimed to ensure balance between the welfare of society as a whole and the fundamental rights of the individual. The responsibility for the implementation of economic and social policies was shared by the central Government and the States. The task was an arduous one, given the country's multiracial, multicultural and multi-ethnic population of 850 million persons with life expectancy on the rise, one third of whom were under 30.

13. According to the Secretary-General's report (A/47/349), in 1990 there were more than 1 billion young people in the world, 179 million of whom lived in the developed countries and 833 million in the developing countries. The message of hope which those figures should have brought was unfortunately overshadowed by the problems which they portended. The lack of vocational skills of most of those young people was compounded by the growth in drug addiction and juvenile delinquency. Ironically, the incidence of juvenile delinquency had risen in many countries, owing to certain socio-economic problems often associated with development, namely, poverty, rapid population growth, inadequate housing, industrialization, urbanization, unemployment, breakdown of the family unit, erosion of traditional values, weakening of community support services, inadequacy of social services and the inability of the education system to respond to new challenges.

14. In order to cope with those problems, India must focus on greater awareness of the potential of young people and, to that end, undertake economic and social restructuring, enact legislation and create appropriate social and government mechanisms.

15. His delegation recalled the five basic approaches emphasized by the United Nations during International Youth Year 1985: providing assistance to

(Mr. Ahamed, India)

Governments in implementing and evaluating national youth policies; preparing multisectoral reports on the needs of youth; organizing workshops on youth-related topics; strengthening channels of communication; and strengthening system-wide cooperation under the Administrative Committee on Coordination. The tenth anniversary of the International Youth Year could provide an opportunity to revitalize the youth movement, which had unfortunately suffered from the United Nations financial constraints.

16. Between 1985 and 1995, the world social milieu had greatly changed. Young people were faced with tougher choices and fewer opportunities in a society increasingly succumbing to drugs, AIDS and street crime.

17. The Government of India had established a department to coordinate youth affairs at the national level. The scheme of national Yuva Kendras or youth centres, established in 1972, was aimed at improving the employment outlook of non-students and rural youth. The centres organized leadership training programmes and social services. Another programme was aimed at involving university and high school students in rural reconstruction programmes and activities to assist the weaker sections of society. Those students were also involved in the promotion of national family welfare programmes and the national literacy mission. Cultural exchanges were also arranged between students from different parts of India and between Indian and foreign students. The Government provided free primary education nation wide and financed the education of meritorious students from the disadvantaged sectors of society. India also had one of the largest affirmative action programmes for students from the most disadvantaged groups and for women.

18. The cooperative movement, which had taken shape in India as early as 1904, had helped ensure a more equitable distribution of wealth. The number of cooperative societies had risen in the agricultural sector alone to 350,000. The institutionalized practice of distributing inputs to farmers and marketing their agricultural produce through cooperatives owned by them had to a large extent eliminated the middleman and had strengthened the cooperative sector in rural areas. The Anand dairy development scheme in the state of Gujarat had served as a model for similar schemes in other countries. In 1990 there were close to 60,000 dairy cooperatives in India.

19. In addition, as part of its programme of economic development of tribal peoples, the Indian Government had organized cooperatives to enable them to function as multi-purpose societies and to ensure that there was no outside exploitation of tribal wealth. Those measures had in the main been successful. The Government had also encouraged the organization of labour contract cooperatives, especially in the building sector, to prevent the exploitation of the labouring classes by stipulating a minimum wage.

20. On the question of disabled persons and of ageing, his delegation noted that the Indian Government had set aside a sum of $70 million in the national budget during the eighth five-year plan, 1992-1997, for the welfare of the disabled. Indian society was strongly supportive of the elderly, as was

(Mr. Ahamed, India)

illustrated by its interest in the concept of the extended family. Most States in India operated some kind of social assistance programmes for persons 55-65 years of age. However, social development could not be achieved by government alone. That was why cooperation across borders, that is, the United Nations, had a role to play in that area.

21. Mr. BURCUOĞLU (Turkey) said that the international community was still undergoing a social crisis that affected all regions and all societies. Poverty, unemployment, insecurity and crime were gaining, sometimes imperilling stability, and creating a crisis that must be overcome as quickly as possible. Experience had shown that neglect of social problems was very costly.

22. Turkey, which was in the throes of very rapid social change and intense urbanization, was attempting to resolve its social problems and to mitigate their consequences. It was trying to improve the quality of life for its people, to guarantee equal opportunity for all and to leave as much room as possible for individual initiative, without neglecting the importance of solidarity and community support. In taking care to ensure that vulnerable groups could assume a productive role in society, it sought to develop its human resources and to give its economic growth a human and social dimension. Its efforts in the social field were oriented mainly towards young people, the family, the elderly and disabled persons.

23. Young people from 15 to 24 years of age made up more than 20 per cent of the Turkish population. Institutional arrangements had been made for their benefit and various job training, apprenticeship and entrepreneurship programmes were in place. Another priority was the protection of youth from such scourges as drug abuse, delinquency and AIDS.

24. The Turkish Government was making efforts to protect the family and help it to adapt better to the changes in society while improving its standard of living. Turkey would participate in the preparation and observation of the International Year of the Family in 1994. A national coordination committee had been established for that purpose and local committees would be set up before long.

25. Ageing of the population, although more evident in the developed countries, was progressing rapidly in developing countries. Turkey was no exception to that general rule. The institutions concerned and the media were becoming more and more aware of the phenomenon of ageing and were alerting public opinion to it. Health services and rehabilitation centres were being organized and the Government was encouraging private sector initiatives for the elderly. It should also be noted that Turkey was one of the co-authors of the Proclamation on ageing that had been adopted by the General Assembly during the International Conference on Ageing.

(Mr. Burcuoğlu, Turkey)

26. On the question of disabled persons, the Turkish Minister of Labour and Social Security had explained the Turkish Government's policy in detail at the General Assembly session marking the close of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons. On that occasion, his delegation had distributed a comprehensive report on Turkish policy on disabled persons. In paragraphs 35, 37 and 71 of the Report of the Secretary-General on Implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons and the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons (A/47/415) some of the measures taken by Turkey to benefit the disabled had been cited.

27. Turkey had supported the convening of a world summit for social development as soon as the idea was put forward by the Government of Chile and wished to reiterate its support for that initiative, which should allow leaders of the entire world to make the individual the focus of development and international cooperation activities. In that context, his delegation congratulated Mr. Juan Somavia on the considerable work he had accomplished since his appointment as Special Representative of the Secretary-General to study the possibility of such a summit, and noted with interest the decision of the Danish Government to host it in Copenhagen.

28. In conclusion, his delegation expressed its support for the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme and noted that, given the seriousness of the crimes linked to illicit drug trafficking, adequate cooperation and coordination between that programme and the old United Nations International Drug Control Programme, as well as between the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Commission and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, was indispensable.

29. Mr. TROTTIER (Canada), speaking on behalf of Australia, Canada and New Zealand, said that the Governments of those three countries, which had taken an active part in developing the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme, welcomed the establishment of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. It was to be hoped that, with the establishment of the Commission, priorities would be set in a constructive and rational manner in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice. The three countries had therefore participated with great interest in the inaugural session of the Commission at Vienna in April 1992.

30. With regard to its priorities for the period 1992-1996 - which must be viewed within the framework of reform and restructuring - the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, rather than trying to deal simultaneously with all the issues falling within its competence, should concentrate its efforts in areas in which Governments had had to invest a great deal of time and money in recent years, namely the control of national and transnational crime, crime prevention in urban areas and the improvement of the management and administration of criminal justice.

(Mr. Trottier, Canada)

31. Transnational criminality was much too large a problem to be pursued by nations acting in isolation. Countries must therefore adopt measures to help each other on a bilateral and multilateral basis. It was true that a great deal of procedural work had been done and that mechanisms had been established to help Member States prosecute individuals in domestic courts. In particular, the progress achieved at the Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, in the areas of extradition, mutual assistance and transfer of criminal proceedings, should be noted. However, much more should be done. The three Governments believed that further consideration should be given to the establishment of an international criminal court; in that context, they acknowledged the valuable work carried out by the International Law Commission. It should be noted in that respect that the Secretary of State for External Affairs of Canada, Mrs. Barbara McDougall, had called for the convening of an international meeting of experts in Canada to mobilize legal expertise concerning the drafting of the statute of such a court by the International Law Commission.

32. With regard to the role of the United Nations congresses on the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders, Australia, Canada and New Zealand were pleased to note that the setting of priorities and the development of policies, which had formerly fallen to the congresses, would now be left up to the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, but hoped that the congresses would continue to play a central role in the implementation of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme, including the determination of which issues were likely to become sources of concern in the future.

33. Yet it would be extremely difficult for the Commission to deal with the new priorities of the crime prevention and criminal justice programme if it did not have the necessary resources, as was currently the case. Adequate funding of the programme was therefore necessary, in accordance with the programme of action annexed to General Assembly resolution 46/152, particularly paragraph 32, in which it was recommended that the Secretary-General should upgrade the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch into a division. In that respect, he pointed out that a corrigendum to document A/47/399, entitled "Measures taken to implement the Statement of Principles and Programme of Action of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme", had been circulated. The corrigendum contained the paragraphs missing from the end of the document, which were of great importance.

34. Mr. AL-DOSARI (Bahrain) said that his country attached great importance to social development. Many of the objectives established by the United Nations in that sphere had already been achieved by Bahrain in recent years. The rehabilitation of criminals and their integration into society, the protection and advancement of the family, the provision of health care to all sectors of society and the development of cooperatives were all an integral part of Bahrain's development plans. In accordance with the precepts of the Islamic Shariah, Bahrain made man and respect for his dignity the very centre

(Mr. Al-Dosari, Bahrain)

of its social policy. His Government also attached great importance to social studies and training, the objective being to improve the skills of workers and enable them to better serve society.

35. His delegation believed that it was essential to strengthen the spirit of cooperation and ensure a better sharing of responsibilities among the various sectors of society. It also considered that all States should plan well ahead for their social development, as that was the only way of coping with the serious problems arising for society from phenomena such as disability and ageing. In that respect, Bahrain supported the International Plan of Action on Ageing, the tenth anniversary of which had recently been celebrated by the General Assembly, and the proposals contained in document A/47/415 relating to the implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons. Bahrain encouraged the establishment of charitable organizations to assist the elderly and disabled and the adoption of legislation providing services for such persons.

36. His delegation deplored the alarming situation of young people described in document A/47/349 and was prepared to give active support to the efforts made at the international level to improve their lot. It supported the recommendations made by the Secretary-General in his report on cooperatives (A/47/216), in particular with regard to proclaiming an international year of cooperatives. It looked forward to the world summit for social development, to be held in Denmark, which would be an opportunity for all countries to unite their efforts to combat poverty.

37. Mr. STREJCZEK (Poland) said that the role and activity of the United Nations in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice had become more intensive and comprehensive, especially since the Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, held two years previously, and the Ministerial Meeting held in Paris in November 1991. He welcomed the establishment of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, the convening of which only two months after its establishment by the Economic and Social Council marked the determination of the international community to strengthen international cooperation in combating crime.

38. At its first session, the Commission, of which Poland was a member, had proposed concrete measures to give effect to the statement of principles and programme of action adopted by the participants at the Ministerial Meeting in 1991, and then by the General Assembly in resolution 46/152, and had reiterated that the United Nations must assert its leadership in a pragmatic way by rendering practical assistance to Member States and strengthening cooperation. It should also be noted that, in 1992, the Economic and Social Council had adopted resolutions of great importance on strengthening the operational capacity of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme, on organized crime, and on preparations for the Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders.

(Mr. Strejczek, Poland)

39. With regard to combating national and transnational crime, a question which the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice had considered at its first session, Poland believed that drug abuse control was one of its most important aspects and welcomed the resolutions adopted by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs to establish close cooperation in that field, including the area of money laundering. Poland was directly affected by transnational crime.

40. The implementation of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme should involve greater cooperation between States Members of the United Nations, more effective multilateral and bilateral legal assistance, greater sharing of information on crime trends and control and the provision of practical training for law-enforcement officials. The United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme was an effective tool but its objectives could be reached only if the United Nations Office at Vienna had the necessary staff and financial resources.

41. Mr. AL-TAEY (Oman) noted that, according to statistics, disabled persons represented some 10 per cent of the overall population in all societies. As such, they constituted a significant human resource; it was therefore essential that they should participate in national development. All means should be employed to integrate disabled persons into the society in which they lived. Parallel action should also be taken to remove the causes of disablement.

42. The Omani Government had implemented various measures in the interest of disabled persons. First, labour legislation stipulated that a certain percentage of jobs should be reserved for them. In addition, they benefited from financial assistance and extremely comprehensive social cover.

43. Similarly, in line with a tradition which was an intrinsic part of Arab civilization, the elderly were accorded great respect and enjoyed full protection. They were honoured by society, which valued their experience. According to international standards, anyone aged 60 and over was regarded as an elderly person. At both physical and psychological levels, everything had been done to ensure that they enjoyed good living conditions.

44. With regard to young people, the Omani Government had, in accordance with United Nations principles, embraced policies which ensured their growth and development. At national level, youth centres and institutions had been established. In addition, the Government was doing its utmost to ensure that young people played a part in international organizations.

45. Mr. RANASINGHE (Sri Lanka) said that, more than ever, the emerging consensus was that, in the search for a new world order, peace and security were indissolubly linked to the need to place people at the centre of all development endeavours, the aim being to promote better standards of life in larger freedom, as stated in the United Nations Charter.

(Mr. Ranasinghe, Sri Lanka)

46. In the developing countries, social development issues were all the more serious in that development efforts continued to be hampered by external factors, which in turn impeded the success of the structural adjustment programmes undertaken by those countries, where a high political and social cost was paid.

47. While it was appropriate to welcome the initiative to convene a world summit for social development, it was to be hoped that the summit would provide an opportunity to advocate, at the highest political level, renewed international cooperation and address the acute economic causes of social problems.

48. Like the World Bank, Sri Lanka believed that social action was a profitable investment. The country could pride itself on having obtained satisfactory results in the area of human development, such as high life expectancy, low infant mortality, significant calorie intake, high adult literacy and effective primary health care. However, that did not mask the considerable difficulties still to be overcome, namely the provision of employment, capital and technology for increased production and a social security system for disadvantaged groups. His delegation also regarded as extremely apposite the themes proposed for the summit by the Secretary-General, namely poverty alleviation, employment and social cohesion.

49. Poverty alleviation could no longer be regarded as simply an act of charity. It was now agreed that it represented an indispensable component of sustainable development and social cohesion. The States members of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) had launched a major programme aimed at self-reliant income generation for the poor and their welfare. The international financing institutions should support that type of initiative in order to respond to non-military threats to peace and security during the current decade and beyond. The proposed world summit should serve in particular to emphasize the positive effects that poverty alleviation could have on curbing environmental degradation and allowing sustainable development.

50. His delegation shared the concern for youth expressed by the Secretary-General in his report on the subject (A/47/349), in which he indicated that the momentum created by the International Youth Year seemed to have declined. A world programme of action should therefore be formulated which would, over the next decade, reverse the trend of deterioration which characterized the situation of youth. The number of young people was particularly large in the developing countries, where they were often prevented from finding gainful employment by economic factors beyond their control. That was the case even where, paradoxically, the quality of training received had boosted their expectations, and, eventually, exacerbated their frustration. The situation could even strain the unique social security network represented by the family unit.

(Mr. Ranasinghe, Sri Lanka)

51. One third of Sri Lanka's population was between the ages of 15 and 35. Youth issues therefore represented a high national priority. Measures taken by the Ministry for Youth Affairs were complemented by those of the National Youth Services Council, which implemented programmes on anti-narcotic action, youth guidance and counselling, the building of youth villages and the promotion of cultural activities. Moreover, the national programme of poverty alleviation focused specifically on poor youth, who received financial assistance to help them establish their own enterprises.

52. The unrest and discontent among youth also arose from a feeling of being alienated from political and social life, although their participation was a key to stability in any democratic society, particularly at a time when competitiveness and modern technology threatened to bring about the loss of identity and even the abandonment of traditional values. An independent Commission on Youth in Sri Lanka had therefore recommended in 1989 concerted action to strengthen the participation of youth in socio-political decision-making processes. Hence, young people now played a greater part in the management of local groups.

53. Action undertaken at the national level was enriched by an exchange of data, experience and know-how at the regional and international levels. The initiative taken by Sri Lanka and the other States members of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation to declare 1993 Youth Year in the region would provide an opportunity for such exchanges. That initiative should provide political support for consideration of questions relating to young people and revitalize international cooperation in a sector which had not yielded the results that had been expected after a promising start during the International Youth Year.

54. Mrs. DROZD (Belarus) said that the Charter of the United Nations vested in the Organization a dual mandate: to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom, and to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples. The organizations in the United Nations system set social development among those priorities on which States should focus their cooperation, as was demonstrated by, inter alia, the International Plan of Action on Ageing (1982), the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons (1982), the Guidelines for Further Planning and Suitable Follow-up in the Field of Youth, the United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (1988), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979), and the draft declaration on the elimination of violence against women (1992). The major resolutions adopted by the Second (Social) Committee of the Economic and Social Council at its most recent session were a further confirmation. Belarus was a sponsor of the resolution in which the Economic and Social Council recommended the convening of a world summit for social development on the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, in 1995. That recommendation deserved to be received all the more favourably as it was the well-being of mankind itself that lay at the

(Mrs. Drozd, Belarus)

heart of the planned meeting. One of the fundamental objectives of the meeting would be to examine the political, social and economic issues posed by development in a world marked by a sharp deterioration in the situation of more than one fifth of its population. Poverty, unemployment, crime and national hatred had reached such a scale that it was necessary to rethink completely the way in which social problems should be addressed.

55. It was not by chance that Belarus had an interest in the summit. A comparative analysis of social policies and of the systems of social welfare of countries that had attained different levels of development was a topical subject for the young Republic of Belarus, which had just achieved independence. The transition from one economic system to another compelled Belarus to rethink socio-economic issues completely and, moreover, to do so while in the grip of the worsening economic crisis that had accompanied the collapse of the Soviet Union. Belarus suffered from inflation and unemployment and its population's welfare was deteriorating. The socio-economic and political upheavals had been further complicated by the consequences of the disaster at the Chernobyl power plant.

56. The Government of Belarus had reacted by launching an economic stabilization and social welfare programme. It had set up an employment agency and a retirement fund and promulgated laws on the welfare of disabled persons and war veterans. A project for a State social security system was being studied. The Supreme Council of the Republic of Belarus, which was currently holding its regular session in Minsk, was considering legislation relating to the indexation of income to inflation, employment and health insurance.

57. While earnestly calling for the convening of the summit, his delegation none the less considered that the preparatory process could be entrusted to the Commission for Social Development and that the summit itself could be held within the framework of the regular session of the General Assembly, thereby permitting the United Nations to effect a saving that was fully justified by its current financial circumstances.

58. Belarus considered that the world targets on ageing for the year 2001 and the guidelines for the establishment of national targets on ageing deserved serious consideration as they had been designed to assist Member States to define and achieve their own targets in that sphere.

59. Her delegation noted with concern that, despite some positive achievements, the World Youth Campaign, launched as part of the International Youth Year, had not maintained its initial impetus. It was all the more important therefore to continue the planning and suitable follow-up activities in that field as the future of the whole of mankind depended on the solutions that the international community would find for the problems of its younger generations. The fact that the situation of youth had barely improved was principally attributable to the worsening of the world economic and social

(Mrs. Drozd, Belarus)

situation, which had brought with it a sharp decline in living standards, particularly among the most vulnerable groups of the population, including young people, as well as a reduction in the funds allocated to youth programmes. The effectiveness of the action undertaken by the United Nations in that field could be improved if recognition was given to the importance of the political role played by young people, if they were more closely associated with United Nations programmes and organs and if a place was made for them within delegations. The links between national and international youth organizations should be tightened, the exchange of information between specialized non-governmental organizations and the United Nations improved, the draft world youth programme of action towards the year 2000 should be completed, the activities proposed by the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs with a view to the tenth anniversary of International Youth Year should be implemented, and questions concerning youth should be placed on the agenda of the world summit for social development.

60. Questions relating to the family were of deep concern to her delegation, as her country's economic and social difficulties aggravated the problems faced by families, in particular women. Infant mortality was high (12.1 per 1,000 live births in 1991), morbidity among newborn children was increasing, and ever larger numbers of children suffered from chronic illnesses or disabilities. Almost 20,000 orphans and other children were wards of the State in Belarus. Her delegation accordingly attached great importance to the declaration of 1994 as the International Year of the Family, which it saw as an opportunity for the adoption of measures which would truly give effect to all the instruments that the situation of women and children had prompted the international community to adopt.

61. As the International Cooperative Alliance would celebrate its one hundredth anniversary in 1995, Belarus supported the proposal made by the Economic and Social Council in resolution 1992/25 that the first Saturday of each year should be observed as an international day of cooperatives.

62. Lastly, her delegation welcomed the establishment of a new organ of the Economic and Social Council, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, which opened up new prospects for international cooperation in combating crime.

63. Mr. VENTEGODT (Denmark) said that the five Nordic countries which he represented, namely, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, and his own country, were extremely concerned over the deteriorating social situation, not only in the developing countries, but also in several industrialized countries where unemployment, marginalization and poverty were on the rise. At least 200 million people were living below the poverty line in the industrial market-economy countries, in the former Soviet Union and in Eastern European countries. That situation led to high rates of drug addiction, homelessness and suicide. In many parts of the world, conflicts between political factions were causing immense human suffering, as well as extensive physical damage to

(Mr. Ventegodt, Denmark)

the economic infrastructure. Many political regimes were carrying out flagrant violations of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of their peoples and ethnic minorities.

64. The Nordic countries believed that it was necessary to address all those aspects of human suffering in order to promote social and economic development. The eradication of poverty in the world could only be achieved through the peaceful resolution of conflicts, the introduction of democratic practices and, above all, the elimination of the widening gap between rich and poor countries. It was time to realize that social development was a prerequisite for economic development and that the two must go hand in hand. Social development policies should focus on households, bearing in mind that women were often the principal caretakers of the family. Lastly, economic and social development must be combined with the protection of natural resources.

65. The Nordic countries recognized the seriousness of the problem of drug abuse at all levels and believed that it could be solved only if the demand for drugs was curbed and alternative sources of income were provided to drug-producing countries. The social and health costs of alcohol abuse should also be given greater prominence by the international community in its debates.

66. With regard to crime, the international community, in view of the limited resources available for crime prevention and control, should give priority to the following areas: transnational crime, including organized crime, economic crime and money laundering.

67. As for the situation of disabled persons, resources devoted to disability issues within the United Nations system should be increased. The United Nations development organizations should integrate the needs of disabled persons into their regular programming of activities.

68. Referring to forthcoming major international events, he commended the convening of the World Conference on Human Rights, scheduled to take place in June 1993, which would provide an opportunity to review progress made in the field of human rights since the adoption of the Universal Declaration. The Nordic countries also attached great importance to the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development. They wished to stress that people were a resource and not a threat and that the underlying problem was that of poverty. They therefore welcomed the proposal for the convening of a world summit for social development in 1995. That summit should provide an opportunity to put people at the centre of development and to address such basic issues as poverty, in particular the feminization of poverty; the situation of children, youth, the elderly and the disabled; and productive employment and social cohesion, the latter being understood as the need to create a social environment which promoted the participation of the population. The summit would also provide an opportunity to emphasize the importance of maintaining a proper balance between economic incentives and a fair distribution of resources, in order to contribute to sustainable

(Mr. Ventegodt, Denmark)

development. Finally, the world summit should contribute to the overall objective of development and the consolidation of democracy. Non-governmental organizations should be encouraged to participate actively in the summit and the preparatory process should take full account of other United Nations conferences relating to social questions. Funding for the summit should be provided through United Nations budgetary resources and, if necessary, through the provision of additional resources. Denmark was proposing Copenhagen as the venue for the world social summit. The Nordic countries supported that proposal, thus confirming their commitment to social development.

AGENDA ITEM 91: ELIMINATION OF RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION (continued)

Introduction of draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.10

69. Mrs. ZINDOGA (Zimbabwe), introducing draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.10 on behalf of Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and her own country, said that currently, 93 States had ratified or acceded to the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid. The draft resolution underlined the importance of the universal ratification of the Convention and appealed to those States that had not yet done so to ratify that instrument without further delay. She hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted without a vote.

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records

THIRD COMMITTEE
17th meeting
held on
Monday, 26 October 1992
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 17th MEETING

Chairman:	Mr. KRENKEL	(Austria)
later:	Mr. JALLOW (Vice-Chairman)	(Gambia)

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 93: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (continued)

(a) QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION AND TO YOUTH, AGEING, DISABLED PERSONS AND THE FAMILY (continued) (A/47/214-E/1992/50, A/47/216-E/1992/43, A/47/339, A/47/349, A/47/369 and A/47/415 and Corr.1; A/C.3/47/4)

(b) CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE (continued) (A/47/80-S/23502, A/47/87, A/47/88-S/23563, A/47/232-S/24025 and Corr.1, A/47/312-S/24238, A/47/344, A/47/356-S/24367, A/47/379, A/47/381, A/47/391 and A/47/399 and Corr.1)

1. Mrs. RAOELINA (Madagascar), speaking under agenda item 93 (a), said that the very disturbing social situation in the developing countries, particularly in Africa, which was aggravated by indebtedness, the deterioration in the terms of trade, protectionist policies and the restrictive monetary and financial policies of the developed countries, was a flagrant violation of the recognized right to development. The Human Development Report, 1992 indicated that there were enormous disparities between the wealthiest and the poorest countries, and showed that the situation was particularly dramatic in Africa, where 32 of the 47 least developed countries and 18 of the 20 countries ranked at the bottom of the human development index were to be found. The collapse of communism had left countries that had placed their hopes in socialism in a quandry. Democracy and human rights had indeed gained ground, but, as indicated in the report, there were no development institutions managing the new integrated world economy, democratically and in the interests of the world's people. Similarly, the deterioration in living conditions in the least developed countries meant that the feeling of greater political security at the international level was accompanied by a growing feeling of insecurity at the individual level. The family, the basic social unit, was withstanding the pressures exerted on it less and less successfully. Health programmes that had been set up, particularly for the benefit of children, were not being properly implemented owing to a lack of resources, and, driven by necessity, people - of whom there were ever greater numbers - were laying waste to the forests and thus merely worsening their situation.

2. The external constraints were such that the developing countries were obliged to use development models that often conflicted with their peoples' interests, particularly their cultural interests. Although the poor countries must do everything within their power to ensure that their peoples' basic needs were met, the rich countries must, for their part, provide the poor countries with effective support. Women, children, young people and the aged were the members of society who suffered most as a result of the rigours of structural adjustment and the debt burden, which were sources of tension and political instability.

(Mrs. Raoelina, Madagascar)

3. The world summit for social development, which should take place in 1995, should seek to improve the living conditions of each and every individual. The summit could lead to an integrated social development programme and contribute to a significant mobilization of resources, lasting development, sustained economic growth and, in particular, equitable relationships both between individuals and between States, which was the best way of guaranteeing social harmony and, consequently, world peace.

4. Mr. RATA (New Zealand) said that, in a world that had changed, the United Nations was reorganizing to better achieve its fundamental objectives. The effectiveness of the United Nations in the areas of international security and economic cooperation was linked to its effectiveness in promoting social development. The New Zealand Prime Minister, Mr. Bolger, reflecting the views of the Secretary-General, who had referred in An Agenda for Peace (A/47/277) to the multidimensional nature of security, had indicated that social structures and policies that failed to produce justice and economic advancement and that marginalized minorities were causes of insecurity and conflict at an international level. While United Nations efforts to improve the situation of people with disabilities and the situation of the aged had had some success, a great deal remained to be done. Similarly, the difficulties facing young people required a coordinated international response. The United Nations could advance its social development activities through a successful world summit for social development; however, if concrete and tangible results were to be produced, as New Zealand hoped they would be, careful planning was required and there needed to be early agreement on the focus for the summit and on the summit's objectives.

5. Mrs. MOLATLHWA (Botswana) said that, in view of the deterioration in the world economic situation and the calamities, aggravated by civil strife and tribal clashes, which were overwhelming Africa and other regions of the world, Botswana appreciated the fact that social issues were slowly being brought closer to centre stage at the United Nations and could no longer be regarded as solely domestic issues. Her delegation welcomed the proposal to hold a world summit on social development and, together with other delegations, would like issues relating to people with disabilities and the aged to be considered at the summit. With regard to preparations for the International Year of the Family (1994), it was regrettable that only 40 countries had succeeded in establishing national coordinating committees. Botswana had already held two consultation workshops and was taking steps to hold a national forum where non-governmental organizations would be represented, which should result in the establishment of a national programme to address family issues.

6. In his report on policies and programmes involving youth (A/47/349), the Secretary-General gave a depressing description of the problems faced by young people (unemployment, alcoholism, drug abuse and delinquency). Governments, international agencies and non-governmental organizations must join efforts to combat those problems, and the financial burden borne by most developing

(Mrs. Molatlhiwa, Botswana)

countries must be alleviated in order to pave the way for the provision of socio-economic programmes. Botswana set aside a growing share of its national budget for development programmes to curb the drift of the rural population to urban areas. Furthermore, education, which was now free and to which over 90 per cent of children had access, and health care, which was also available to a large proportion of the population, were among the priorities of the Government of Botswana. A coordination unit had been established at the Ministry for Labour and Home Affairs, which had produced a draft policy designed to involve young people in the country's social, economic, political and cultural affairs, and which had encouraged the private sector and non-governmental organisations to set up youth projects in consultation with young people. Young people and children made up over half of the population of Botswana and had the same problems as young people and children elsewhere; in particular there had been an increase in the number of street children. The National Development Plan for the period 1992-1997 and the 1981 Children's Act for the rehabilitation of young offenders focused on preventive action in that connection, and a number of non-governmental organisations would be assisted with funds.

7. Despite the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989 and the holding of the World Summit for Children in 1990, the world remained a place full of danger for children (violence, discrimination, exploitation, hunger, homelessness and such diseases as AIDS). Her delegation hoped that the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children would create a better world for children. The Government of Botswana was preparing a national plan of action for submission to the Organization of African Unity in November 1992.

8. Ms. WHITE (Canada), speaking on agenda item 93 (a), said that at the International Conference of Ministers Responsible for the Status of Persons with Disabilities, held at Montreal on 8 and 9 October 1992, it had been agreed that a ministerial working group would be established to define a mechanism to facilitate collaboration among ministers in the field of ageing and the disabled.

9. In its latest report, Amnesty International had described the conditions faced by children, the most vulnerable members of society. Lack of education, malnutrition, famine, gratuitous violence and even executions were evils to which children continued to be prey. As a result of the Declaration and Plan of Action adopted at the World Summit for Children, Canada had taken concrete action for children. In addition to measures already implemented at various levels of government (legislation requiring the reporting of child abuse cases to the proper authorities and the distribution of milk to elementary schools), Canada had, as part of the "Brighter Futures" initiative, ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child and approved the allocation of $2.1 billion to support working parents. Earlier in the year, Canada had issued a national action plan, which had been favourably received by UNICEF and the Child Development Initiative, which promoted children's well-being.

(Ms. White, Canada)

10. Because families were in a state of flux, the International Year of the Family, to be celebrated in 1994, was very timely. Canada had already begun launching various initiatives to celebrate that event, inspired, in several cases, by United Nations proposals. One example was the establishment of the Committee for the International Year of the Family, which would plan, encourage and coordinate public and private initiatives in Canada and administer funds to support community-based activities. Canada was also active on the international level, having seconded an official to the International Year of the Family secretariat in Vienna. It hoped that the publication of Families of the World had promoted a better understanding of the family internationally, as well.

11. The States Members of the United Nations having decided that they should pursue their discussions, Canada believed that only international cooperation in the economic, political and social fields could promote a new vision with greater focus on people's basic needs. The world summit for social development planned for 1995 should stimulate such cooperation. It should also help to determine how to place people at the centre of development and international cooperation. The preparatory work for the summit should benefit from the goals already defined in the field of population and in the context of the Global Strategy for Health for All by the Year 2000 and the Plan of Action of the World Summit for Children. Canada shared the concerns expressed by the Secretary-General in his report to the Economic and Social Council (E/1992/80). The field of social development was very broad, and the importance of developing a concise, limited and well-targeted agenda could not be overemphasized. Her delegation had three suggestions. First, in order to avoid duplication and an added financial burden, the Commission for Social Development or a smaller committee established by it should function as the preparatory committee for the summit. Next, the Commission should determine the broad outlines of the summit agenda at its February 1993 session, and the preparatory committee should submit a specific agenda to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. Finally, the creation of national committees should be left to the discretion of individual countries, who looked forward to the holding of the summit and its success.

12. Mr. ALI (Iraq), speaking on agenda item 93 (a), said that social development, which was related to the development of the individual, depended on a strong economy. However, the reports of United Nations specialized agencies showed that social development was very slow or even non-existent in some countries, particularly developing countries. That uneven pace of development was widening the gap between developed and developing countries.

13. Iraq believed the situation was due to several factors, notably the debt burden, obstacles to the transfer of technologies to developing countries, declining commodity and raw materials prices, rising prices for manufactured goods, high inflation rates which were exported to developing countries and high interest rates. All those factors undermined the economies of developing countries. Iraq therefore believed that the United Nations should develop

(Mr. Ali, Iraq)

mechanisms to govern relations between States so that developing countries could bolster their economies, a move which would certainly have a positive effect on social development.

14. Iraq wished to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Somavia, for his statement of 20 October 1992 and his progress report on the consultations concerning the world summit for social development, discussed in document E/1992/80. Iraq favoured the convening of a summit, which would have positive results in the developing countries in particular. In a communication to the Secretary-General dated 1 January 1992, Iraq had emphasized that social development had been hindered in several countries by a number of problems (poverty, illiteracy, famine, unemployment, drug abuse, inequality between men and women and pollution) and that the establishment of democracy and the improvement of the human rights situation in a country depended on the country's level of economic development. The industrialized countries should bear their share of responsibility in that area.

15. All development, particularly social development, had ceased in Iraq over the past two years because of the unjust embargo imposed by the Security Council. That embargo affected the most vulnerable groups in society (women, children and the elderly) and would, if continued, seriously hinder the country's development. Nevertheless, against all odds, Iraq intended to continue its efforts to ensure social development.

16. Mr. MARUYAMA (Japan) said that economic and political problems had long overshadowed social problems. Although that attitude was changing, and, as one speaker had noted, investment in social development was as rewarding as investment in economic development, fundamental social problems had changed very little. The rapid political, social and economic changes on the international scene had not brought about social progress; on the contrary, they had made conditions worse for the most vulnerable groups - the elderly, the disabled, women and children - whose well-being was important not only in and of itself but also for the peace and stability of society.

17. In the current period of dramatic change, the United Nations itself was undergoing major restructuring. Much remained to be done, however: because they were multifaceted, social development issues had been dealt with by several bodies within the United Nations system. It was essential to improve their coordination in order to avoid duplication and promote the optimum utilization of limited resources. The Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs must be strengthened to better fulfil its coordination and liaison role, thereby fostering a more integrated and effective approach to social development programmes.

18. The two special sessions of the General Assembly devoted to the disabled and to ageing reflected the international community's interest in social development. With respect to the disabled and the elderly many speakers had stated that the time had come to change emphasis from consciousness-raising

(Mr. Maruyama, Japan)

to action. The same held true for other aspects of social development such as crime and drug abuse control, youth and cooperatives.

19. His delegation welcomed the Proclamation on Ageing adopted by the General Assembly at its 42nd plenary meeting. Unfortunately, while the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons had come to an end, its goals had yet to be achieved. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), at its forty-eighth session, had adopted a resolution on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 1993-2002, jointly sponsored by 33 countries, including Japan and the People's Republic of China. Japan attached great importance to international cooperation in that area and had contributed $700,000 to the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons. The Fund should continue to promote activities for all disabled persons, but particularly for disabled women and elderly persons and persons with multiple disabilities.

20. The growth in transnational crime - particularly, organized crime linked to drug trafficking - and in urban violence was a source of mounting concern to the international community; those scourges, which the criminal justice system was powerless to counter, endangered civilization, democracy and social stability and even posed a threat to international security. International cooperation was therefore urgently needed, particularly in training and information activities. As a member of the new Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, Japan would continue to support United Nations activities in that important area.

21. Japan also pledged its continued support for the technical cooperation and training activities of the United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, which to date had trained more than 2,000 people.

22. The world summit for social development, to be held in 1995, was of concern to the entire world; Japan shared the view of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General that its agenda should be limited to core issues; in addition, it was vital that a precise budget should be submitted as soon as possible to the financial authorities of the Organization. Japan hoped that the numerous events planned for 1995 would be carefully coordinated to ensure that they all contributed to the promotion of social development and social justice.

23. Mr. TSEPOV (Russian Federation), speaking on agenda item 93 (b), said that the changes on the world political scene had enabled States to devote more attention to socio-economic and cultural issues and to join forces at the international level. The growth of criminal circles, however, which were becoming increasingly ingenious and diversified and equipped with vast financial resources which had enabled them to move freely across national frontiers, posed a real threat to the stability and development of countries, particularly those whose political, economic and legal systems were undergoing a difficult transition period.

(Mr. Tsepov, Russian Federation)

24. Turning those difficulties to its advantage, the criminal world was displaying great adaptability by operating like an organized corporation whose power placed it above State structures. His delegation therefore believed that organized crime, at both the national and international levels, was rightly included among the priorities of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. It also welcomed the efforts by the participants in the Ad Hoc Expert Group Meeting on Strategies to Deal with Transnational Crime, held at Smolenice, Czechoslovakia, and the International Seminar on Organized Crime, held at Suzdal, Russian Federation. Furthermore, the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 1992/23, had invited States members to take due account of the recommendations arising from those meetings.

25. The Secretary-General's reports on crime prevention and criminal justice (A/47/381 and A/47/399) gave a good overview of the problems and a fairly complete picture of the activities of organized crime, ranging from the new (the dumping of dangerous and toxic wastes, black-market dealings in transplant organs and falsification of credit cards) to the traditional (the illicit arms trade, drug production and trafficking, money laundering and the theft of national cultural properties), one of the most insidious of which (links with political power and corruption of the law and government officials) undermined the very foundations of the State.

26. The fight against crime, particularly in its most dangerous form, organized criminality, was too serious an issue to be discussed routinely by the international community and the United Nations; his delegation therefore urged all organizations concerned to give it their closest possible attention and to formulate recommendations and proposals that would help Member States strengthen their legislation, guarantee the normal functioning of their institutions and effectively protect the life, property, rights and interests of their citizens.

27. It was imperative that States should pay closer heed to the Guidelines for the prevention and control of organized crime in national and international activities, which would become more effective if public opinion was mobilized through more active collaboration with non-governmental and intergovernmental international organizations. Furthermore, those States which had already developed legislation to deal with organized crime (in particular money laundering, the tracing, monitoring and forfeiture of proceeds of crime and the monitoring of large-scale cash transactions) should share their experience with other States that wished to adopt laws or to broaden their legislation in those areas. It would thus be possible to limit the room for manoeuvring and to ensure better surveillance of the transnational activities of criminal organizations which currently profited from weak legislations. The problem of organized crime had become particularly acute in the Republics of the former Soviet Union, whose criminal organizations refused to recognize the sovereignty of the new independent States and endeavoured to operate throughout all their territories as if they still constituted a single space. Russia and the majority of its neighbouring

(Mr. Tsepov, Russian Federation)

States had realized that they could only check that phenomenon by coordinating their activities, and they had begun to take appropriate steps, such as the Kiev meeting of ministers of internal affairs of the States members of the Commonwealth of Independent States, which had stressed that only joint efforts by the law enforcement bodies of all the States of the former Soviet Union could enhance the effectiveness of the battle against crime; the meeting resulted in the signing of a cooperation agreement between the ministers of internal affairs of the States members of the Commonwealth and of the Republic of Estonia concerning efforts to combat the illicit trafficking in drugs and psychotropic substances.

28. The time had thus come for much closer cooperation in combating organized criminality and other forms of crime. In that regard, the United Nations, by virtue of its authority, had a major role to play by participating in joint activities undertaken by the international community.

29. Mr. Jallow (Gambia), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

30. Mr. CAMPOS (Chile), speaking on agenda item 93 (b), said that, safety was an area of concern of all citizens in any society but one in which the State should play a fundamental role. In view of the upsurge in transnational crime, however, international cooperation was also required.

31. A step forward had been taken at the Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, held at Havana in 1990, and at the Ministerial Meeting on the Creation of an Effective United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme, held in France in November 1991; those events had led to resolution 46/152, by which the General Assembly had adopted the Declaration of Principles and the Programme of Action of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme and had resolved to establish a new Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, whose first session had been held at Vienna in April 1992.

32. Citing the Secretary-General's report on the strengthening of international cooperation in combating organized crime (A/47/381), he regretted that the classic forms of illicit international traffic such as the traffic in narcotic drugs and weapons and money laundering had been supplemented by such new forms of crime as the black market in human organs, crimes against cultural property and the traffic in toxic substances and wastes. Those forms of crime posed a threat to public morality and undermined the rule of law and the stability of democratic systems. By distorting market dynamics, they also threatened to become a source of economic and financial instability, particularly damaging to the developing countries. The growing complexity of crime made detection and control increasingly difficult. International cooperation, particularly within the context of the United Nations and non-governmental organizations, was more necessary than ever before. It was essential to harmonize legislations through international conventions and to strengthen regional and global cooperation mechanisms.

(Mr. Campos, Chile)

33. Aware of the need to adopt legislation covering the new forms of crime, the Chilean Parliament was studying new legislation on drug trafficking, and, in particular, money laundering. Chile was also endeavouring to revise its adoption legislation, since the traffic in children was also connected with organized crime. In addition, the Chilean Parliament would shortly enact new, modern legislation on computer-related matters and planned to enact legislation on organ transplants, taking guidance from the relevant discussions in the United Nations.

34. Crime prevention also required improvements in education, the eradication of poverty, the modernization of the economy and an effective judicial system, equipped with the necessary resources. Chile's three major objectives with regard to crime were the prevention of crime, the rehabilitation of offenders and the prevention of recidivism.

35. Violence was a recurrent theme in contemporary culture, as reflected in the media. It was important for States and societies to respond by reaffirming the ethical values which should be the basis of society. Accordingly, Chile had initiated a programme to improve the quality of education with a budget of $243 million, of which $170 million had been financed by the World Bank. It was the first time that the World Bank had supported a project of that nature.

36. Other measures had been adopted or were under consideration: a programme to assist female heads of household, legislation on family violence, the fight against traditional forms of discrimination in Chilean society, measures to assist young people (the creation of a national youth institute, the establishment of a fund for cultural initiatives, the funding of youth organizations, etc.); moreover, anything which promoted public health, housing, social security, sports and recreation also helped to prevent criminality. In order to enhance crime-prevention efforts and to encourage the rehabilitation of offenders, Chile had remodelled its bail and probation regimes and was endeavouring to improve its penitentiary system.

37. Provisions had been incorporated into the Penal Code which made genuine repentance a factor mitigating criminal responsibility. Moreover, in accordance with international agreements, juvenile delinquents were no longer subject to criminal penalties, but only to correctional measures. Another preventive measure, an alcohol control act, was currently in preparation. New criminal courts had been established and the material and human resources of the police had been enhanced.

38. The war against crime should not make people forget that criminal justice was a means for society to defend itself and that the laws must be enforced with due regard for the rights of those who violated them.

39. Ms. PHORNMONGKOL (Thailand), referring to agenda item 92 (a), said that her country had initiated a number of programmes and policies to safeguard the well-being of children, including the adoption of the National Youth Policy (implemented since 1979) and the establishment of the National Youth Bureau. The development of children and young people was also one of the objectives of the five-year economic and social development plan. The labour laws had been revised to specify the kind of work which children could do and the permissible working hours and to prohibit the employment of children under 13 years of age. Likewise, the availability of primary education in rural areas and the enhancement of compulsory education had contributed to safeguarding the long-term welfare of children.

40. In 1992, her Government had acceded to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and had adopted a National Declaration on Children, drafted in accordance with the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children.

41. Thailand believed that the constructive integration of youth into society was crucial to development and must be addressed as national policy. The tenth anniversary of the International Youth Year, in 1995, would be an opportunity for the international community to refocus attention on issues relating to youth and to stimulate renewed action at all levels. At the same time, the World Youth Programme of Action must continue to be supported.

42. Because of its awareness that the family was the very foundation of society, Thailand had established a National Committee on the Family and had undertaken a new analysis of family law. At the international level, it had participated in the preparations for the Internation Year of the Family and, in that context, would establish a National Assembly on the Family in 1993.

43. Lastly, she expressed her delegation's support for the convening in 1995 of the world summit for social development, which would be an opportunity to take stock of what had been achieved and what remained to be done in that area.

44. Mr. MARTELLI (Italy), speaking as Minister of Justice and referring to agenda item 93 (b), expressed his Government's support for the Organization's efforts in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice, and welcomed the results achieved in the first phase of the new Programme of Action adopted at the Ministerial Meeting on the Creation of an Effective Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme, held at Versailles in 1991.

45. The growth of crime in Italy had prompted the Government to adopt important new measures which had also improved international cooperation in that area. Special Public Prosecutor's Offices, both regional and national, had been set up to supervise investigations into Mafia crimes; they could serve as reference centres for international investigations into organized crime. The provisions of the criminal code governing judicial assistance were being revised, both in order to overcome the difficulties concerning issues of extradition and mutual assistance and to develop new forms of cooperation, especially with regard to the confiscation of the proceeds of crime, in

(Mr. Martelli, Italy)

compliance with recent international agreements in that area. The objective was not only to punish criminal acts, but also to disrupt the structure of the organizations themselves and to exhaust their sources of revenue. The confiscation of the proceeds of crime limited the means available for the perpetration of further crimes and prevented the transfer of illegally acquired assets to legitimate business enterprises. Together with legislation on money laundering and active cooperation between financial institutions within the framework of criminal investigations, new measures had been adopted, such as the confiscation of illegally acquired assets, and more radical measures were currently under study. To that end, it had been necessary to change the traditional rules governing the taking of evidence in criminal proceedings, and to adopt special procedural rules allowing for the effective implementation of decisions, as well as measures to combat the problem of illegally acquired assets.

46. In order for measures at the national level to have the desired effects, however, it was important to harmonize national regimes with those in effect in other countries and to strengthen international cooperation between law enforcement agencies and representatives of the judicial authorities. Within the framework of the Council of Europe and the European Community, Italy had actively supported all initiatives to promote a harmonized, if not a unitary, European criminal jurisdiction, and to integrate national justice systems. His Government believed that the "regional" European environment was favourable to the overcoming of the problems of differing legal systems, and that it would be still more favourable once the Treaty on European Union had entered into force.

47. His Government believed that the harmonization of criminal law could be achieved in the context of the United Nations in respect of crimes which the international community considered to have international importance. To that end, consensus should be sought on the definition of criminal activities and on intensifying international cooperation, which should not be limited to the fight against drug trafficking, but should extend to all forms of organized crime.

48. It was necessary to develop new methods for the blending of investigative and evidence-gathering techniques, through cooperation in specific instances between authorities of different countries, on the model of the strong collaboration between Italian and foreign authorities which had recently led to the discovery of major trafficking networks and the recovery of large amounts of money.

49. Likewise, the training of judicial personnel should be given international dimension. He had encouraged several initiatives, within the framework of the European Community, to improve the technical and scientific competence of judicial personnel so as to enable them to face complex phenomena such as organized crime and to allow a fruitful exchange of experience between countries.

(Mr. Martelli, Italy)

50. He welcomed the results of the first session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, held at Vienna in April 1992, particularly the priority given in the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme for the period 1992-1996 to organized crime, money laundering and the role of criminal law in the protection of the environment. That choice had been corroberated by the European Community's adoption, on the initiative of Italy, of a resolution on money laundering and the adoption by the Economic and Social Council of resolution 1992/23 on organized crime, which requested the Secretary-General to continue the analysis of information on criminal activities and to promote international cooperation in that area. Italy would contribute fully to the implementation of those recommendations. The Commission had correctly emphasized training, assistance and technical advisory services, taking into account the needs of developing countries. The United Nations should not, however, limit itself to technical cooperation, but should continue discussing and devising international standards in the fields of criminal justice and human rights.

51. The provisions on the monitoring of the results achieved in implementation of the decisions of the Commission should make it possible more effectively to adapt the Programme to real needs. For that reason, he hoped that additional resources commensurate with the importance of international cooperation in combating crime would be made available to the Programme and that countries would be encouraged either to provide financial support for operational activities or to supply services, technical assistance or advisory services directly. It also was necessary to continue cooperating with non-governmental organizations. The establishment of the International Scientific and Professional Advisory Council, with headquarters in Italy, demonstrated the support of the Italian Government for the Programme, which also enjoyed the support of external contributions.

52. Turning to the question of the establishment of an international criminal court, which would be dealt with thoroughly in the Sixth Committee, he said that his Government supported the idea of an international court competent to deal with crimes against peace and humanity and certain international or transnational crimes. The establishment of such a mechanism would demonstrate that States were willing to find a common solution to crimes against the international community, strengthen recourse to legal redress as a result of the moral prestige of and the scope of decisions taken by, such a body, and thereby would strengthen world peace and stability.

53. His Government believed that the traditional tools of international cooperation, even if strengthened, were not always sufficient to guarantee the effective repression of international or transnational crimes. For example, the well-known principle of "prosecute or extradite" often was drastically hampered by legal and political factors. Several recent cases had shown that justice could be paralysed by the conflicting interests of countries and by a reciprocal lack of confidence in the respective judicial systems of States.

(Mr. Martelli, Italy)

The impossibility of reaching a legal solution could give rise to severe international tensions. Unresolvable conflicts of jurisdiction might arise, either because the State in which the accused resided for various reasons showed reluctance to extradite him, or because the State decided to proceed against the individual in circumstances unsatisfactory to the injured State.

54. The existence of an international criminal court would make it possible to avoid such conflicts of jurisdiction and would reduce requests for extradition, and the decisions of the court would carry substantial moral and juridical weight. The international court also could be called upon to deal with transnational criminal acts, in respect of which there could be concern that the overlapping of complex national legal systems might hamper investigations and the smooth administration of justice. The intervention of an international criminal court also appeared useful in situations such as armed conflicts, when the normal channels of judiciary cooperation among States could not be used or it was not possible to count on the satisfactory working of the judicial system of the appealing party in order to guarantee the interests of the other party or third parties. For all those reasons, his Government, although aware of the difficulty of establishing such a legal structure, hoped that the technical difficulties could be overcome, bearing in mind the existence of a large body of literature on the subject and the urgency of the problem, and hoped that the International Law Commission, whose work it supported without reservation, would be given the appropriate mandate to prepare, as soon as possible, a draft statute for an international criminal court.

55. Lastly, urgent measures must be adopted concerning the crimes which had been committed and were still being committed in the territories of the former Yugoslavia and, in that respect, he welcomed the adoption by the Security Council of resolution 780 (1992) on the establishment of a Commission of Experts to gather evidence of grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions and other violations of international humanitarian law.

56. Mrs. LOPES DA ROSA (Guinea-Bissau) welcomed the end of the cold war, which had reduced the danger of nuclear war, and the progress made in the field of human rights. Reaffirming the key role of the United Nations, she said that it was urgent to take advantage of the new climate of understanding and cooperation to resolve regional conflicts and attack underdevelopment, which was the cause of instability.

57. Progress in the social and economic spheres unfortunately had not met the expectations generated by the changes in the world order. Millions of the world's children were dying daily, malnutrition was disabling innumerable people, and poverty continued to prevail in the developing countries. Eighty per cent of the world's wealth belonged to 15 per cent of its population, while 1.5 billion human beings lived in abject poverty.

58. The situation in Africa was particularly alarming. Three quarters of the least developed countries were in Africa, which was the only region of the

(Mrs. Lopes da Rosa, Guinea-Bissau)

globe where debt was higher than economic output; Africa also was the victim of terrible natural disasters (including drought and desertification).

59. The international community must make a greater effort to eradicate human suffering as a prerequisite for sustained and equitable social development. Economic and social issues were in fact indissociable from one another, since the lack of financial resources hampered the implementation of social programmes.

60. She therefore looked forward to the convening of a world summit for social development, the world conferences on human rights and women and the population conference, the observance of the International Year of the Family and the convening of a conference on the African child.

61. Her delegation believed that development must entail the elimination of disparities between nations and within nations, and it supported the suggestions contained in the note by the Secretary-General in document E/1992/80 concerning the issues to be addressed at the world summit on social development.

62. She welcomed the preparation of a plan of action for family welfare within the framework of the International Year of the Family and described the efforts which her country had undertaken on behalf of the family despite its economic and social problems, which were aggravated by structural adjustment policies.

63. The elderly traditionally played an important role in the society of her country. She therefore welcomed the commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the International Plan of Action on Ageing and the adoption of draft resolution A/47/L.5/Rev.1 by which the General Assembly had adopted the Proclamation on Ageing and had decided to declare the year 1999 the International Year of Older Persons; she endorsed the recommendations of the Secretary-General concerning the adoption by the General Assembly of international objectives on ageing.

64. Her country considered it deplorable that ten years after the adoption of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons and the proclamation of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons, the objectives were far from having been achieved. Disabled persons in her country - there were many as a result of war and disease - were cared for by the State and enjoyed social benefits. Her delegation supported the proposals by the Secretary-General, in particular, those calling for a United Nations system-wide programme of action, but emphasized that the developing countries would need additional international cooperation in order to implement the programme. Her country planned to hold a major celebration in honour of the International Day of Disabled Persons proclaimed in draft resolution A/47/L.4.

(Mrs. Lopes da Rosa, Guinea-Bissau)

65. Youth should receive priority attention in social development programmes, for the future of countries was in their hands. There were more than one billion young people in the world, the majority of whom lived in developing countries and were particularly threatened by illiteracy, unemployment, underemployment, a lack of professional qualifications and disease, all factors which contributed to the increase in juvenile delinquency and crime. Owing to a lack of financial resources, the International Youth Year had not had the expected results; her delegation therefore welcomed the decision to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Year in 1995, for that would provide an opportunity to evaluate measures already adopted and formulate a world programme of action to the year 2000.

66. It was impossible to be indifferent to an economic and social order which the international community recognized was unjust. Her delegation reaffirmed its commitment to the ideals of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 and to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966. At the current stage of international détente, the United Nations increasingly was called upon to play a catalytic role in the service of peace and development.

67. Mrs. AL-KHALID (Kuwait) said that according to international statistics disabled persons made up 10 per cent of the world's population. Unless the rights of that population group were respected, it would find itself excluded from society, with a concomitant impact on the groups which supplied it with social and cultural services. Plans and programmes must therefore be devised to protect disabled persons, help them to be self-sufficient, and integrate them fully in the life of society. The protection of disabled persons was a moral as much as an economic and social question: it revealed the progress made by individual societies.

68. In Kuwait the protection of disabled persons was guaranteed in the 1962 Constitution which devoted three articles to equality of opportunities for all citizens. That guarantee was expressed in material form in the activities of public or private centres and bodies furnishing services or finding jobs for the disabled. A disabled person had been elected to Parliament to represent that social group and would take part in the drafting of the relevant official policies.

69. The implementation of the international community's programmes for disabled persons was encountering difficulties, including armed conflicts and the occupation of neighbouring countries. The occupation of Kuwait, for example, had led to an increase in the number of disabled persons as a result of the explosion of mines or the use of torture in detention centres.

70. The consequences of the occupation of Kuwait were still being felt. The Iraqi regime was still turning the Kuwaitis which it held in detention into

(Mrs. Al-Khalid, Kuwait)

mentally sick persons. The international community must obtain authorisation for the International Committee of the Red Cross to visit detention centres in Iraq to bring pressure to bear on the Iraqi regime and secure the prisoners' release.

71. Despite the suffering which Iraq's aggression had caused, the Kuwaiti people had not neglected its humanitarian responsibilities: despite the destruction suffered by Kuwait, its social protection centres had continued to make their services available to Kuwaiti and other disabled persons, including eight Iraqis.

72. The United Nations must use sanctions to outlaw from the international community States which had recourse to physical and psychological torture and the use of land-mines, for such practices led to considerabe increases in the numbers of disabled persons. It must put an end to the activities of aggressor and oppressor States which scorned human rights and continued to stockpile weapons of mass destruction. In that connection, her delegation was also keenly aware of the sufferings of the people of Bosnia and Hersegovina and of the Palestinian, Lebanese and Somali peoples, which had also seen their numbers of handicapped persons increase.

73. In the 1990s the United Nations programme on disability must create the conditions for equalisation of opportunities for the disabled, especially with regard to job openings and to rehabilitation conceived as adaptation to the disabled of the environment in which they lived. Information organs must also put pressure on the international community to accord greater attention to the problems of that population group.

74. Mrs. VALLE (Cuba) said that, because poverty and despair were the lifeblood of an international economic system which wanted to rule for all eternity, it had still not proved possible to close the gap between the rich of the North and the poor of the South, even though the problem threatened international security and stability.

75. The full realisation of the economic, social and cultural rights of hundreds of millions of human beings would never be anything but a pipedream until action was taken to correct the effects of the deterioration in the economic situation in the 1980s, the debt crisis and structural adjustment programmes, which had led to a general drop in living standards, increased destitution and declines in the main economic and social indicators in the developing countries.

76. Given that gloomy situation, her delegation attached great importance to the convening of a world summit for social development which would enable the United Nations to focus its activities on meeting the needs of the peoples of the world by stimulating a debate on all the aspects of social problems and encouraging the adoption of the concrete solutions which they required.

(Mrs. Valle, Cuba)

77. For more than 30 years Cuba had been wrestling with the difficulties inherent in any development process imprisoned by a global economic crisis, difficulties made worse by the imposition of an economic blockade designed to deny the Cuban people its right to development and better living standards. The Cuban people remained nevertheless extremely proud of the great progress which the building of an infinitely more just and human society had enabled it to achieve in the social field.

78. Mr. OULD MOHAMED MAHMOUD (Mauritania), speaking on behalf of the countries members of the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), said that the continuing deterioration in the world social situation had disappointed the hopes raised, especially in the developing countries, by the upheavals of recent years. The growing gaps between the countries of North and South, which stemmed from the nature of the international economic system, meant more people living in total destitution, more people with no access to health care, and more people who could not read or write.

79. The developing countries had shown that they were ready to cooperate fully with the international financial institutions in order to implement the proposed economic stabilization policies. However, it must be recognized that the problem of the developing countries could be solved only by the creation of a new partnership for development. The initiative for the convening of a world summit for social development had therefore come at the right time. The summit would coincide with the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations and ought to provide an opportunity to reaffirm the political commitment to work for social progress and the achievement of better living standards in a greater freedom.

80. The current economic crisis was having a particularly serious impact on vulnerable social groups such as the disabled, the elderly and the young. The case of young people illustrated the gap between the nobleness of the initiatives taken by the United Nations for their benefit, such as the first World Youth Assembly and the holding of International Youth Year in 1985, and the realities of the international economic order which prevented young people from participating fully in economic, social and cultural life. Several million young people in the developing countries did not attend school. Those who left their own localities in the hope of a better life in town found themselves, owing to the lack of reception machinery and job opportunities, left to their own devices - when they did not succumb to the scourges of juvenile delinquency, drug addiction and violence.

81. Only with the help of realistic new international economic relations could the developing countries find all the necessary resources for youth programmes. But young people were in the best position to identify their own needs and express their own aspirations. They must therefore be involved in any meetings or activities concerning young people.

(Mr. Ould Mohamed Mahmoud, Mauritania)

82. The disappearance of ideological confrontation and the celebration in 1995 of the tenth anniversary of International Youth Year were an invitation to the international community to turn its attention to the problems of the younger generation, definitely the most complicated of all the problems which every society now had to tackle in the preparation of a draft world youth programme of action. The Committee might also recommend the convening of a second World Youth Assembly.

83. The family was the basic unit of society and was therefore the institution most seriously affected by the widespread increase in poverty. The International Year of the Family in 1994 would provide an opportunity for considering the changes which must be made if the family was again to play its role of protector of all its members. Tunis, the capital of one of the countries of the Arab Maghreb, was to host the preparatory meeting for the Year for the African and West Asian region.

84. Mrs. KAMAL (Secretary) said that in document A/C.3/47/L.12, which contained the amendments proposed by Turkey to draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.9, the word "Recalling" should be replaced by "Reaffirming".

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.